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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 HARARE 002310

SIPDIS

DCHA/OFDA FOR KHANDAGLE, BURNS, AND MARX
DCHA/FFP FOR LANDIS, BRAUSE, SKORIC, AND PETERSON
AFR/SA FOR POE, FORT AND MARJORIE COPSON
AFR/SD FOR ISRALOW AND WHELAN
STATE FOR AF/S DELISI AND RAYNOR
STATE/INR FOR LESLIE CURTIN AND WILLIAM WOOD
NAIROBI FOR DCHA/OFDA/ARO FOR RILEY AND MYER,
REDSO/ESA/FFP FOR SENYKOFF
NSC FOR DWORAK
PRETORIA FOR DCHA/FFP DISKIN, DCHA/OFDA BRYAN, AND
USDA/FAS HELM
ROME FOR LAVELLE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: EAID EAGR PGOV ZI
SUBJECT: FARM WORKERS

SUMMARY

¶11. THE EFFECTS OF GOVERNMENT MACROECONOMIC POLICIES INHIBITING CROP PRODUCTION, IMPORTS, AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION AND MARKETING, COMBINED WITH LOWER THAN AVERAGE RAINFALL, HAVE RAISED THE SPECTER OF FAMINE IN ZIMBABWE. UP TO 1.5 MILLION EX-COMMERCIAL FARM WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE CURRENTLY OR COULD SOON BE IN VULNERABLE, AND FACE POSSIBLY LIFE THREATENING CIRCUMSTANCES DUE TO FARM EXPROPRIATIONS IN ZIMBABWE WHICH HAVE FREQUENTLY BEEN ACCCOMPANIED BY VIOLENT INVASIONS. MANY EX-FARM WORKERS' VULNERABLE SITUATIONS ARE EXACERBATED BY THE POLITICAL TENSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH FARM EXPROPRIATIONS, AND MINIMAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IS BEING PROVIDED TO EX-FARM WORKERS BECAUSE OF A LACK OF QUALIFIED IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS IN COMMERCIAL FARM AREAS AND POLITICAL TENSIONS ASSOCIATED IN WORKING WITH EX-FARM WORKERS. WHILE COPING MECHANISMS AND SEVERANCE PACKAGES MAY SUSTAIN EX-FARM WORKERS IN MASHONALAND AND MANICALAND FOR ANOTHER FEW MONTHS, THE INABILITY TO OBTAIN SUFFICIENT FOOD IN MANY AFFECTED AREAS WILL EVENTUALLY FORCE PEOPLE TO MOVE. THERE IS DOCUMENTED AND ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE THAT INCREASING NUMBERS OF EX-FARM WORKERS ARE ON THE MOVE. WHILE MOST EX-FARM WORKERS WILL PROBABLY RELOCATE TO URBAN AREAS IN ZIMBABWE, THERE MAY BE INCREASING NUMBERS OF DISPLACED LEAVING FOR NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. OFDA/RA BELIEVES THAT THE MIGRATION TO CITIES AND TOWNS WILL INTENSIFY SOON, WITH VERY NOTICEABLE INCREASES BY JANUARY. END SUMMARY.

GENERAL IDP SITUATION

¶12. A TEAM COMPOSED OF A USAID/DCHA/OFDA EMERGENCY DISASTER RESPONSE COORDINATOR AND INFORMATION OFFICER TRAVELED TO ZIMBABWE FROM OCTOBER 6-9 TO MEET WITH USAID/ZIMBABWE AND THE USAID/DCHA/OFDA HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE ADVISOR (HRA) IN HARARE. THE TEAM TRAVELED TO ZIMBABWE TO DISCUSS THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON (IDP) SITUATION, NOTING AN ONGOING ASSESSMENT BY THE ZIMBABWE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST (ZCDT) THAT SUGGESTS THAT AS MANY AS 1.5 MILLION EX-COMMERCIAL FARM WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE CURRENTLY OR COULD SOON BE IN VULNERABLE, AND POSSIBLY LIFE THREATENING CIRCUMSTANCES FOLLOWING FARM EXPROPRIATIONS (NOTE: THE TERM EX-FARM WORKERS HEREINAFTER REFERS TO BOTH ACTUAL EX-FARM WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES. END NOTE). THESE EX-FARM WORKERS ARE LOCATED PRIMARILY IN NORTHERN ZIMBABWE IN THE PROVINCES OF MASHONALAND EAST, CENTRAL, AND WEST, AND MANICALAND. ON SEPTEMBER 19, THE ZCDT RELEASED THE RESULTS OF A SURVEY IDENTIFYING 750,000 VULNERABLE EX-FARM WORKERS, MANY OF WHOM HAVE BEGUN TO MOVE ALONG ROADWAYS AND TO THE MARGINS OF CITIES. ZCDT REPORTS THAT MANY OF THOSE REMAINING ON THE FARMS ARE DOING SO WITHOUT ACCESS TO SAFE WATER AND SANITATION. NEWS SOURCES HAVE ALSO REPORTED DEATHS FROM DIARRHEA AND CHOLERA AMONG EX-FARM WORKER POPULATIONS.

¶13. SOME EX-FARM WORKERS ARE RECEIVING MEAGER 'FORCED RETRENCHMENT' SEVERANCE PACKAGES FROM EXPelled FARMERS, AS REQUIRED BY ZIMBABWEAN LAW. HOWEVER, MANY HAVE NOT RECEIVED ANY SEVERANCE PAY. ON SEPTEMBER 20, OFDA/HRA INTERVIEWED TWO YOUNG EX-FARM WORKERS IN EPWORTH, AN AREA IN SOUTHEAST METROPOLITAN HARARE. EACH WAS GIVEN 2400 ZIMBABWEAN DOLLARS (Z\$400 = \$US2.50) IN SEVERANCE AND WAS SUBSISTING ON A DAILY BREAD LOAF THAT COST THEM

Z100. (NOTE: AT THE CURRENT EXCHANGE RATE, ONE DOLLAR U.S. EQUALS Z950. END NOTE.) WHILE SEVERANCE PACKAGES VARY ACCORDING TO THE LENGTH OF SERVICE, THEY LIKELY WON'T LAST MUCH LONGER WITH THE RISING INFLATION IN ZIMBABWE.

14. MANY EX-FARM WORKERS' VULNERABLE SITUATIONS ARE EXACERBATED BY THE POLITICAL TENSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH FARM EXPROPRIATIONS. REPORTS INDICATE ABUSE OF EX-FARM WORKERS AND DENIAL OF FOOD FOR POLITICAL REASONS. A REPUTABLE HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION STUDY INDICATES THAT APPROXIMATELY THREE OUT OF FOUR EX-FARM WORKERS HAVE BEEN PHYSICALLY ABUSED. THE GENERAL AGRICULTURAL AND PLANTATION WORKERS UNION OF ZIMBABWE (GAPWUZ) CITES THAT AS MANY AS 60% OF EX-FARM WORKERS HAVE PARENTAGE ORIGINATING IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND THUS ARE TECHNICALLY CONSIDERED STATELESS, DESPITE HAVING VOTED AND LIVED IN ZIMBABWE FOR DECADES, IF NOT GENERATIONS. AS A RESULT, MANY OF THOSE WHO LEAVE COMMERCIAL FARMING AREAS MAY BE ATTEMPTING TO BLEND INTO THE URBAN POPULATION IN ORDER TO ESCAPE PERSECUTION. THIS COMPLICATES THE IDENTIFICATION OF IDPS FOR PROVISION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

15. AT PRESENT, ONLY MINIMAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IS BEING PROVIDED TO THE EX-FARM WORKERS FOR SEVERAL REASONS. AS THE NORTHERN AREAS OF ZIMBABWE HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT, IN LARGE PART BECAUSE OF THE COMMERCIAL FARMS, INTERNATIONAL NGOS HAVE TENDED TO FOCUS ON THE LESS DEVELOPED AREAS OF THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. HAVING ALREADY ESTABLISHED AN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AREAS, THE INTERNATIONAL NGOS ARE FOCUSING THEIR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES IN THOSE AREAS AS WELL. ANOTHER REASON IS THAT MOST NEWLY ARRIVED NGOS ARE IN THE PROCESS OF REGISTERING AND ESTABLISHING THEMSELVES, BRINGING IN STAFF, AND DEVELOPING LOGISTICAL CAPABILITIES. THE GOZ'S BUREAUCRATIC AND LENGTHY REGISTRATION PROCESS HAS SIGNIFICANTLY DELAYED A NUMBER OF NGOS FROM COMMENCING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR HOW MANY OF THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED NGOS, IF ANY, WILL TARGET THE NORTHERN AREAS AND/OR THE EX-FARM WORKERS. FINALLY, BASED ON INTERVIEWS WITH INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS CONDUCTED BY OFDA/EDRO AND HRA ON OCTOBER 8, THESE ORGANIZATIONS ARE RELUCTANT TO WORK IN NORTHERN AREAS BECAUSE OF THE POLITICAL TENSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH ASSISTING EX-FARM WORKERS. AT LEAST THREE MAJOR INTERNATIONAL NGOS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN DENIED PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS IN ZIMBABWE, SEVERELY RESTRICTING THE AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS IN VULNERABLE AREAS.

16. IN SOME COMMERCIAL FARMING AREAS, LOCAL NGOS REPRESENT THE ONLY PROVIDER OF ASSISTANCE TO EX-FARM WORKERS. A LOCAL NGO CONSORTIUM, FOOD SECURITY NETWORK (FOSENET), HAS BEEN FORMED TO MONITOR FOOD DELIVERY PROBLEMS NATIONWIDE AND EX-FARM WORKERS ARE A SUBSET OF THEIR CONCERN. THEIR OBJECTIVES ARE TO FIELD LOCAL CONCERNS AND ISSUES, AND PASS THEM ON TO THE UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (UNDP), THE UN WORLD FOOD PROGRAM, DONORS AND THE INTERNATIONAL NGOS. FOSENET IS CONSIDERING EXPANDING ITS SCOPE OF WORK TO INCLUDE RELIEF ELEMENTS AS WELL.

17. IN ADDITION TO THE LACK OF QUALIFIED IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS IN SOME SEVERELY Affected AREAS, THERE IS NOT YET AN EFFECTIVE IDP IDENTIFICATION FRAMEWORK IN PLACE. USAID SUPPORTED THE CREATION OF THE UNDP/RELIEF AND RECOVERY UNIT (UNDP/RRU) AS THE LEAD COORDINATING UNIT FOR THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE, WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING THE IDP SITUATION. HOWEVER, THE RRU'S IDP SPECIALIST POSITION, ESSENTIAL FOR EFFECTIVE MONITORING OF THE IDP SITUATION, HAS YET TO BE FILLED. IN THE ABSENCE OF AN IDP MONITORING UNIT, UNDP/RRU RECENTLY SIGNED A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL WELFARE TO CONDUCT A JOINT ASSESSMENT OF THE NUMBER OF DISPLACED EX-FARM WORKERS. WHILE THIS MAY BE A STEP FORWARD, AN INDEPENDENT, NON-GOVERNMENTAL IDP MONITORING PROGRAM REMAINS VITAL TO THE EFFECTIVE PROVISION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.

POTENTIAL DISPLACEMENT

18. OFDA/RA ESTIMATES THAT TWO-THIRDS OF THE EX-FARM WORKERS WERE WORKING ON FARMS IN MASHONALAND, IN A 150 KILOMETER RADIUS AROUND HARARE. THIS IS THE PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THE EXPROPRIATED COMMERCIAL FARMS ARE LOCATED. AS THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN THESE AREAS CONTINUES TO DETERIORATE, MOST EX-FARM WORKERS ARE LEFT WITH THE CHOICE TO STAY WHERE

THEY ARE AND HOPE THAT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FINDS THEM, OR TO MOVE IN SEARCH OF FOOD.

¶9. AT PRESENT, IT APPEARS THAT MOST PEOPLE ARE CHOOSING TO STAY WHERE THEY ARE. HOWEVER, THERE IS DOCUMENTED AND ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE THAT SMALL, BUT INCREASING NUMBERS ARE ON THE MOVE. SOME OF THE EX-FARM WORKERS, PROBABLY IN THE LOW THOUSANDS, ARE LEAVING ZIMBABWE IF THEY HAVE PASSPORTS AND MONEY. NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES ARE NOT OPENLY EMBRACING THEM. OFDA/HRA IS HEARING DISTURBING STORIES THAT THE GOZ MAY BE TRUCKING SOME FARM WORKERS TO AREAS NEAR BORDERS, BUT THESE HAVE YET TO BE CONFIRMED. HOWEVER, IF LEFT TO THEIR OWN DEVICES, AND IF THEY CAN FIND TRANSPORTATION, OFDA/HRA BELIEVES THOSE ON THE MOVE WILL HEAD TOWARD HARARE AND OTHER MEDIUM-SIZED TOWNS. SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENT GROWTH IN THE EPWORTH, HATCLIFFE EAST, DZIVARASEKWA, PORTA CAMP, AND OTHER AREAS AROUND HARARE HAS BEEN REPORTED BY NGOS AND WITNESSED BY OFDA/RA.

¶10. THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS TO BELIEVE THIS TREND WILL CONTINUE IN THE COMING MONTHS. FOOD MAY BE AVAILABLE IN SHOPS, AND COSTS CAN BE LOWER IN THE CITIES BECAUSE PRICE GOUGING IS MORE CONTROLLED. IN ADDITION, THE COMMUNAL FAMILY STRUCTURE IN RURAL AREAS IS ALREADY STRETCHED TO CAPACITY AND CANNOT SUPPORT ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBERS. FINALLY, AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE URBAN AREAS ARE NOT AS TIGHTLY CONTROLLED POLITICALLY, ALLOWING EX-FARM WORKERS TO ESCAPE NOTICE. AS MANY AS HALF OF THE EX-FARM WORKERS MAY DRIFT TOWARD HARARE AND MOST OF THE REST TO NEIGHBORING SMALL CENTERS SUCH AS CHINHOYI, BINDURA, CHITUNGWIZA, AND MARONDERA. THIS PATTERN OF RURAL TO URBAN DISPLACEMENT WAS ALSO RECORDED DURING THE 1992 FOOD SECURITY CRISIS, SUGGESTING SIMILAR MOVEMENT AS THE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION DETERIORATES.

¶11. SOME HUMANITARIAN WORKERS IN ZIMBABWE BELIEVE THAT IDPS MAY INCREASINGLY SEEK TO ESCAPE FOOD INSECURITY BY LEAVING THE COUNTRY. THEY NOTE THAT EX-FARM WORKERS OFTEN HAVE FAMILY ORIGINS IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND SO MAY HAVE SOMEPLACE TO RETURN TO. IN ADDITION, THE RELATIVELY SMALL SIZE AND EXCELLENT TRANSPORT NETWORK IN ZIMBABWE MAKE MOVING LONG DISTANCES BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT POSSIBLE. WHILE NOT ALL IDPS WILL HAVE MONEY FOR TRANSPORT, A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER MAY CHOOSE TO TRY TO ESCAPE THE CRISIS IN ZIMBABWE. THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA HAS PLANS FOR THE POSSIBLE ARRIVAL OF EX-FARM WORKERS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS. THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE RED CROSS/RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES (IFRC) IN PARTICULAR HAS BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN WORKING WITH RED CROSS SOCIETIES IN COUNTRIES NEIGHBORING ZIMBABWE TO PLAN FOR POSSIBLE ARRIVALS. AS WITH INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN ZIMBABWE, IT MAY BE VERY DIFFICULT TO TRACK NUMBERS OF EX-FARM WORKERS LEAVING ZIMBABWE, AS THEY WILL BE MOVING WITHOUT OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION AND WILL LIKELY TRY TO ESCAPE NOTICE.

EX-FARM WORKERS REMAINING IN PLACE

¶12. THOSE EX-FARM WORKERS WHO HAVE CHOSEN TO REMAIN IN PLACE, OR HAVE NOT YET STARTED TO MOVE, HAVE DONE SO FOR SEVERAL REASONS. OVERALL HEALTH HAS NOT YET BECOME AN ISSUE FOR THE GENERAL POPULATION AND MANY CAN WITHSTAND ANOTHER FEW MONTHS OF WEIGHT LOSS. ALSO, MANY ARE STILL ABLE TO LIVE OFF THEIR SEVERANCE PACKAGE. ANOTHER BENEFIT OF REMAINING IN PLACE IS THE RESIDUAL MAIZE CROP FROM THE COMMERCIAL FARMS. SOME EX-FARM WORKERS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO STASH SMALL AMOUNTS OF THIS MAIZE FOR CONSUMPTION LATER. THESE FACTORS, DEPENDING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES, COULD HOLD PEOPLE IN PLACE FOR ANOTHER TWO TO THREE MONTHS.

¶13. SOME EX-FARM WORKERS MAY LEAVE THEIR FARMS, BUT INSTEAD OF MOVING DIRECTLY TOWARDS THE CITIES, THEY WILL TAKE REFUGE AT OTHER FARMS WHERE THE PRESSURE TO MOVE IS NOT SO INTENSE. OFDA/HRA ALSO SUSPECTS THAT MANY WILL BEGIN TO GO TO CHURCH-BASED MISSIONS WITH HOSPITALS THAT ARE SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRYSIDE. HOWEVER, THESE MAY JUST BE WAY STATIONS ON THE MIGRATION ROUTE TO CITIES AND TOWNS.

CONCLUSIONS

¶14. WHILE COPING MECHANISMS AND SEVERANCE PACKAGES MAY SUSTAIN VULNERABLE EX-FARM WORKERS FOR ANOTHER FEW MONTHS, THE LACK OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OR OTHER HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN THE AFFECTED AREAS WILL EVENTUALLY FORCE PEOPLE TO MOVE. OFDA/HRA BELIEVES THAT THE MIGRATION TO CITIES AND TOWNS WILL INTENSIFY VERY SOON, WITH NOTICEABLE INCREASES BY JANUARY. IN HARARE, THAT MIGHT TRANSLATE INTO 100,000 TO 150,000 ADDITIONAL

EX-FARM WORKERS SQUATTING IN TEMPORARY SETTLEMENTS. BY MARCH, THESE NUMBERS COULD REACH 400,000 TO 500,000. THE SAME DYNAMIC WILL LIKELY APPLY TO THE SMALLER SURROUNDING REGIONAL TOWNS. THE 1992 FOOD SECURITY CRISIS PROVIDES A BLUEPRINT OF POPULATION MOVEMENTS IN A SIMILAR SITUATION. HOWEVER, THE ADDED COMPLEXITIES OF A POLITICAL SITUATION LIMITING IDENTIFICATION AND TARGETING OF IDPS COULD SERVE TO EXACERBATE THE EFFECTS OF THE CURRENT CRISIS BEYOND THAT OF 1992.

RECOMMENDATIONS

¶15. A STRENGTHENED UN HUMANITARIAN IDP MONITORING UNIT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE EFFECTIVE UNDERSTANDING AND TRACKING OF THE IDP SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE. TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, THE USG SHOULD WORK TO IMPROVE THIS CAPACITY. IN PARTICULAR, INFORMATION GENERATION REGARDING THE NUMBERS OF DISPLACED EX-FARM WORKERS AND THE LOCATIONS OF IDP CAMPS AND INFORMAL SETTLEMENT AREAS IN AND AROUND URBAN AREAS IS A HIGH PRIORITY FOR GUIDING HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE.

¶16. INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF DISPLACED EX-FARM WORKERS IN COMMERCIAL FARMING AREAS OF ZIMBABWE. PROGRAMS SHOULD MEET IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY NEEDS, SUCH AS SUPPLEMENTAL AND THERAPEUTIC FEEDING, AS DESCRIBED IN ONGOING SITUATION ASSESSMENTS. SUCH PROGRAMS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED URGENTLY TO DEAL WITH THESE IMMEDIATE NEEDS, BUT ALSO TO PUT ASSISTANCE MECHANISMS IN PLACE BEFORE LARGE-SCALE MOVEMENTS START TO OCCUR.

¶17. THE GROWTH OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN AND AROUND URBAN AREAS SHOULD BE CLOSELY MONITORED, AS LACK OF ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER, FOOD, ADEQUATE SHELTER, AND BASIC HEALTH CARE MAY LEAD TO EPIDEMIC DISEASE OUTBREAK AND DRIVE CONTINUED POPULATION MOVEMENT. WHERE APPROPRIATE, EMERGENCY PROGRAMS RESPONDING TO NEEDS IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENT AREAS SHOULD BE INITIATED. SULLIVAN